

Three Count[®]

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Wrestling bill squashed by Florida committee Regulation opposed by 8-1 margin

By ALEX MARVEZ
Three Count Editor

As the state of Florida's Committee on Regulated Industries proved February 7, pre-determined endings aren't limited to professional wrestling.

By an 8-1 vote, the state agency voted down a bill regulating pro wrestling in Florida. The decision was anticipated prior to the meeting, largely because of the efforts of World Wrestling Federation lobbyist Jim Tillman.

"This was a foregone conclusion, because it was well lobbied" said

Don Hazelton, head of the Florida's boxing commission and proponent of the bill. "I figured we had two votes instead of one."

Had the bill passed, it would have continued to the session of the state's House of Representatives for a vote by the end of the month. The bill is not technically dead, as a continuance motion was passed that allows the matter to be discussed at the next Committee meeting. Such an action, though is not likely. The Committee is not expected to meet again until next fall, although a special session technically may be called to order.

Earlier last week, a new bare-bones bill regarding wrestling was introduced by legislative analyst Janet Clark, replacing the one presented last December by the state boxing commission. The previous bill was criticized because of its attempt to force wrestling to adjust to boxing rules. Wrestlers were barred from performing more than once within a 48-hour period, fighting on the ring apron or outside the ring, and from hitting a referee.

The new bill reduced the legislation
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WCW to announce steroid, advertising policies next week

By ALEX MARVEZ
Three Count Editor

World Championship Wrestling will implement policies concerning anabolic steroids and false advertising within the next week, according to WCW executive vice president Kip Frey.

The announcement of the steroid policy will come in the middle of next week, Frey said on February 11. Several WCW wrestlers taped anti-steroid public service announcements February 10 at a WCW television taping.

"We want to be the wrestling promotion of the 1990s, and we don't think steroids belong there," Frey said.

WCW also will soon begin posting signs outside arenas at live shows announcing when advertised talent will not be appearing. A change in the group's programs to indicate such and announcements prior to matches is also likely.

Briefly...

- **Sawyer dies:** Buzz Sawyer passed away February 7 in California from an apparent drug overdose. Sawyer, 32, was a main event star for Georgia Championship Wrestling in the early 1980s, but vanished from the mainstream after a World Championship Wrestling stint in 1990. More information in next week's issue.

- **WCW schedules June 27 PPV:** WCW will hold its third live pay-per-view show of the year June 27 in Mobile, Ala. The show is yet to be titled, but will not conflict with the group's Great American Bash pay-per-view, held annually in Baltimore.

- **DiBiase-IRS win WWF straps:** Ted DiBiase and Irwin R. Schyster (Mike Rotunda) captured the World Wrestling Federation titles February 7 by defeating The Legion of Doom in Denver. It was the first match back for Hawk, who missed two weeks with a hip pointer.

- **Missy signs contract:** Missy Hyatt has signed a two-year deal to remain with WCW as a color commentator. The deal reportedly would allow Hyatt to remain living in Los Angeles with actor Jason Hervey, with WCW flying her to Atlanta for television tapings.

- **JYD, Koloff return:** The Junkyard Dog and Nikita Koloff have returned to WCW, and will receive mild pushes.

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Committee squashes wrestling bill

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down to a few basic points:

- Requiring wrestling performers (grapplers, referees, managers, et al) to register with the state athletic commission. Unlike in the previous bill, a fee would not accompany this registration.

- The yearly licensing of all promoters with the state. The fee for promoters whose average attendance the previous year was 1,000 fans or more a show was \$1,000. Promoters averaging less faced a \$250 fee.

- Requiring the promoter to give the state notice they are promoting a show. This also requires a promoter to make changes in regards to falsely advertising talent. If a promoter has knowledge an advertised wrestler is not going to appear 14 days or more from the show date, they are required to change all advertisements. If the knowledge is not known until within 14 days, the promoter is required to post signs outside the arena and

"It is sports entertainment. It's all choreographed. The outcome is generally well known. It is not a professional sport that needs state regulation."

**-- Jim Tillman
WWF lobbyist**

make an announcement offering refunds before the opening match.

- Requiring promotions implement their own programs of drug and anabolic steroid testing, and offering drug education classes. The promotion would pay for the cost of the program, and report the results and schedule of testing and classes monthly to the state athletic commission. The program must meet the minimum standards of the NCAA's testing procedures.

- Implementing a five-percent tax on all live wrestling cards held within Florida. The original proposal for the same tax on closed-circuited and pay-per-view wrestling shows viewed in the state was dropped. The five-percent tax on live shows was expected to generate \$142,250 annually, with \$72,000 of that going toward the expense of hiring one new committee member. The original bill called for hiring two members.

- Promoters would be required to place a surety bond of \$3,000 for each event they hold. That gives the arena some protection from an unscrupulous promoter. The commission also would have the power to increase the amount of a surety bond. That would cost the promoter an average of \$150 in bond money each show

(a down payment of five percent is usually all that's required on a surety bond).

- A \$5,000 fine for promoters whose wrestlers intentionally bleed during a match, with the possible suspension of a promoter's license for the said offense.

The presentation of the bill was heard by a Regulated Industries sub-committee. Hazelton and Tillman were the only speakers discussing the bill. Clark was unable to attend the meeting, because she had to attend a House sub-committee meeting concerning alcohol and tobacco products to present five bills of her own. Former WWF wrestler David Shults was planning to attend the meeting, but declined when he could not be guaranteed a chance to speak. There was also no guarantee the bill would be discussed by the Committee, as the likely outcome of the vote was well known earlier in the week. There was speculation the bill would be yanked and presented as an agenda on the floor of the House of Representatives, but Committee chairman Norman Ostrau (D-Plantation) nixed the idea. Representatives from two independent Florida promotions who attended a previous hearing in November -- International Wrestling Federation legal counsel Chris Qualmann and Suncoast Pro Wrestling owner Henry Raines -- were unable to attend the February 7 meeting.

A World Championship Wrestling source said the group was planning to immediately pull out of promoting shows within Florida should the bill have passed, even though it would not go into effect Oct. 1. That included moving the site of the group's May 17 Wrestle War pay-per-view show from the Jacksonville Coliseum. The WWF was also expected to discontinue promoting within Florida.

The same sarcastic jokes and snickers about pro wrestling that were so prevalent at the November meeting were heard throughout the Feb. 7 meeting. Tillman began his speech to the sub-committee by saying, "Contrary to rumors that have been circulating around here, this issue is not going to be resolved by the best two-out-of-three falls between Mr. Hazelton and me". One representative jokingly passed an amendment to sub-committee chair Sam Mitchell (R-Chipley) to include sumo wrestling as part of the bill.

Hazelton spoke first, briefly explaining the content of the wrestling bill, which was part of a boxing bill also supported by the state athletic commission. He also expressed that Part One of the bill, which was concerned with boxing and kick boxing, was "very important" to the state athletic commission in regards to regulating amateur "tough man" competitions.

Tillman spoke next and asked for extra time

teur "tough man" competitions.

Tillman spoke next and asked for extra time because of the large number of speakers who spoke in favor of the bill in previous sessions. Tillman said the WWF was a family-owned business since the 1920s that promotes wrestling, which "as known today, is not a professional sport. It is sports entertainment. Pure and simple. It is entertainment no different than when the Harlem Globetrotters, the circus, Willie Nelson or a rock concert comes to town. (Wrestlers) come to town and get in their costumes. They've got names like Jake the Snake, Hulk Hogan and The Ultimate Warrior. They have body bag matches, Texas chainsaw matches and that sort of thing. They paint their faces, come out for tag-team matches wearing shoulder pads with spikes on them and helmets with horns on them. You don't see boxers coming into the ring that way. There is a lot of hype. It's all choreographed. The outcome is generally well known. It is not a professional sport that needs state regulation." Tillman also explained that "television shows" are now being labelled, "like Wrestlemania VII."

Tillman explained 24 states are currently regulating wrestling, "leaving 26 that don't." He also pointed to Clark's report on wrestling to say the number of states currently regulating the sport has decreased by six since 1987. Tillman explained that the WWF in its Tallahassee shows has barriers that separate wrestlers from the public, helping to protect the public's health. He also explained that the tax generated by this bill was not very much, and left open the possibility the tax would eventually increase.

When addressing the bill's measures, Tillman began by admitting the WWF was guilty of falsely advertising talent. Tillman said the WWF "wanted to stop that. And I believe they will. I believe they will break that ground." Tillman also said that Chapter 817 of the Florida statutes covers deceptive and fraudulent advertising. "If you want to get them to stop this, you could write some stuff in there talking about sports entertainment," Tillman said.

Tillman said the WWF does not allow its wrestlers to intentionally cut themselves. Regarding steroids, Tillman explained they were a far-reaching problem in society. He said one of the leading users of steroids was a group that should be enforcing laws against them -- police officers. "There's no doubt about the use of anabolic steroids in wrestling ... Regulating wrestling is not going to solve the steroid problem until the state of Florida, the law enforcement agencies, get serious about it. The World Wrestling Federation has a recognized drug testing program in place. They've had it since June 1987. Up until last summer, there was no valid test that you could get to detect steroids. We hired Comprehensive Drug Testing, Inc., to handle our drug testing, In November, the first test was given. You have to give this

test a chance to work."

At this point, Mitchell said Tillman would have to wind down his speech, because "We've got a member fixing to leave, and I think you might need him." Tillman finished by asking if Part II (the wrestling aspect) of the bill could be eliminated.

Ostrau, the only sub-committee member voting for the bill, then explained why he supported the wrestling measures. He explained the amendment regarding false advertising as "an instant remedy. You don't have to go anyplace to sue anybody. You just have to go up and ask for your money back. That's fair to the public." Regarding steroids, Ostrau said, "Because of (wrestlers') high visibility, they should not have steroid use. We have heard testimony that wrestlers could not get off because their federation said they had to keep the steroid use to build up their muscles. That is the wrong image the state needs to show. (The bill) does not regulate the industry. It regulates abuses in the industry."

Before the vote, some committee members let their feelings be known on the bill. Mitchell said, "I don't see a need at this stage in the game for regulation. You're telling me we're going to get \$142,000 in, and we're going to spend \$72,000 on a commission member? We're spending a lot of time sitting around this table talking about an insignificant thing. Why in the world do we want to regulate something that doesn't need regulation?" George Albright, who earlier in the meeting made a wrestling wise-crack, said, "It's not much of a sport. I just think we should quit getting into every facet of people's lives. This is entertainment. It's out there for the little guy." Ron Silver, who voted against the bill, said, "Government has so many things to do right now, and I think you have to prioritize somewhere. There are some good points brought up. Maybe at a different place at a different time we need to address it."

After the hearing, Hazelton said, "We don't need wrestling. Wrestling needs us. As tight as the entertainment dollar is, when a dad wants to take the kids to see Hulk Hogan and The Ultimate Warrior, and they're not there, you're cheating the guy. The entertainment dollar only goes so far. The false advertising aspect is an important one. Steroids is an issue where Mr. Tillman is abundantly correct. It's all over the place. But they are incorrect where they say state's attorneys won't do anything about false advertising or anything else. They may not. (The state athletic commission) does. We've gone to the mat with (boxing promoters) Don King and Bob Arum. We always win. We fine people, make them get in line. We're one of the strictest states about boxing. We think we have the ability to do that as far as wrestling is concerned. Maybe not this year, maybe on down the road."

Hogan-Justice split complete; Savage, Piper win big on FOX special

By ALEX MARVEZ
Three Count Editor

The official split between Hulk Hogan and Sid Justice aired February 8 on a prime-time FOX Network special emanating from Lubbock, Tex.

The rest of the show, taped January 27, also cemented the top matches at Wrestlemania VIII, which takes place April 5 at the Hoosier Dome in Indianapolis.

The results:

1. **Roddy Piper** defeated **The Mountie** to retain the Intercontinental title. Jimmy Hart, Mountie's manager, took more bumps in this match than he will at all the non-televised WWF house shows this year. This match started fast and was good from bell-to-bell. The story unfolded after Piper accidentally bumped into the referee. The Mountie delivered a piledriver on Piper and ran to the ring apron to grab a cup of water from Hart. After spilling the water on Piper (who was wearing a T-shirt), Mountie shocked Piper with his gimmick (and yes, it made the buzzing noise unlike at the arenas). Piper didn't sell it, jumped right back up, drove Mountie to his knees and gained control of the shocker. He then zapped Mountie and gained the pinfall. After the bout, Piper removed the T-shirt to reveal a wet suit underneath that read, "Shock proof." Even though it was apparent most of the fans in Lubbock didn't understand that the suit made Piper immune to the zapper's shock, the fake crowd noise dubbed in over the whole show took care of the televised crowd reaction. There was an interview with Bret Hart played during this bout, as Hart will wrestle Piper for the title at Wrestlemania. Grade: B+ (for work and the great finish).

Then came a recap of the Hogan-Justice situation. It began with a clip airing the final minute of the Royal Rumble, where Justice eliminated Hogan, and was consequently eliminated because of the Hulkster. Only the footage had a totally new track of crowd noise over it, with chants of "Hogan, Hogan" echoing, instead of the loud jeers the Hulkster was given live at Knickerbocker Arena in Albany. The fake news conference announcing Hogan against Ric Flair at Wrestlemania VIII was also shown (I wonder if Pro Wrestling Spotlight's John Arezzi could gain access to this news conference, unlike the one where the WWF announced its steroid testing policy). Justice made an apology to Hogan in a pre-taped interview, and the two stood side-by-side for an interview with Shawn Mooney until Justice walked off.

2. Hogan and Justice defeated Flair and The Undertaker via disqualification. Brutus Beefcake ac-

companied Hogan to ringside, and will become an intricate part of the Hogan-Justice feud within the next month. The match itself was not bad considering Hogan and Justice were involved, with Flair and The Taker selling like crazy. Justice and Hogan worked fine teamwork-wise, even though it was obvious there was some friction, until Hogan got in trouble after a Flair figure-four leg-lock. Justice made no effort to tag in, and left Hogan as he lunged toward the corner. Beefcake grabbed Justice on his way back to the ring and was almost punched, with WWF announcer/owner Vince McMahon playing up the fact Beefcake had his face repaired after a "boating accident." It's interesting how in the 19 months since the accident, McMahon didn't make a big deal about it until he thought it could help him sell tickets. As I understand it, Justice will punch Beefcake in the face at an upcoming television taping, and Hogan will dedicate their Wrestlemania match to the Barber.

Flair got his team disqualified by throwing referee Hebner across the ring and stomping on Hogan with the Taker's help. Beefcake ran in and caused a distraction, allowing Hogan to make the save. In post-match interviews, Justice reminded fans he ruled the world. Beefcake insinuated Hogan gave him a blood transfusion that saved his life, and they were "friends to the end." The sound dubbing for this match was also "sweetened" in post-production, which is sad considering Hogan was involved. This scenario will result in Hogan withdrawing from his scheduled match against Flair at Wrestlemania to face Justice. Grade: B- (the match told a great story and the work was fine, although the "partner turning on Hulk" scenario is hackneyed).

3. **Jim Duggan -Sergeant Slaughter** defeated **The Beverly Brothers** when Duggan pinned Beau after a flying spear. McMahon spent little time trying to get either team over, and didn't have much of a chance to, because the match only went about four minutes. The **Legion of Doom** was originally supposed to face the Beverly's, but Hawk had sustained a hip pointer and was unable to wrestle. Grade: D.

Some video footage was then used to highlight the **Randy Savage-Jake Roberts** feud, with that "cute" skit of Damien gnawing on Savage's arm replayed, along with Roberts slapping **The Lovely Elizabeth** on the Tuesday in Texas pay-per-view. Roberts only had five seconds of air time for an interview, which disappointed me, because I think his heel interviews have been fantastic.

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Pillman's speech disgraceful; Hogan phase-down underway for WM VIII

By PAUL HANLIN JR.
Three Count Columnist

I'd like to start this week by welcoming aboard Carlos Rey to the *Three Count* family and for his kind words last issue. I used to get the EMMML shows on Galavision before my cable company made it a premium service, and I was most impressed with the action.

I thought I was done with this last week:

Paul Hanlin Jr. View From the Northeastern Lights

"...all I've watched is Japanese industry buying up neighborhood communities and turning them into high-rise office towers. Seeing close friends of mine, former classmates, looking them in the eye and seeing the despair, because they've lost their jobs due to a rebate courtesy of a Japanese automaker. I assure you one thing. There's one thing I'm not going to watch, and that's you taking that light-heavyweight belt back to Japan... because I'm bringing that belt back to where it belongs: the United States of America."

Way to go Flyin' Brian.

Not.

It doesn't matter if the above tirade was presented by Pillman, Dusty Rhodes or Lee Iacocca. His remarks during the Jan. 21 Clash of Champions were irresponsible and racist. Anyone who cheers him from now on is as guilty of ethnic bigotry as WCW is. Are you and I dumb enough to believe Jushin Liger and layoffs of auto workers go hand in hand? Why is WCW taking this route, as I predicted they would last week? Does *smallest audience ever to watch a Clash* give you a hint?

Those who think booing Liger will bring the economy out of its tailspin are now given the green light by yours truly on February 29 in Milwaukee (which will be previewed here next week). Hopefully, you are in the minority, but I fear not. I thought wrestlers should be judged on their abilities, not where they come from. Silly me.

Enough of that. Why? It just *beez* that way.

Can you stand it? The other Mr. Whipple, a guy who lost his share of mixed boxing matches while as a manager in Memphis – to a woman – winding up as front man for the WWF's top heel? The folks on Duquesne Boulevard in Pittsburgh still haven't come down from Cloud Nine yet. Anyone who remembers Memphis wrestling from 1986-87 knows whereof I speak.

The former Downtown Bruno, now Harvey

Whippleman, will walk that aisle with Sid Justice when the Sidster duels with Hulk Hogan in the semi-final of what is shaping up to be quite an interesting Wrestlemania VIII from Indianapolis. It will be in the Hoosier Dome come hell, high water or Human Growth Hormone. Are the Whiff's sheep (i.e. WWF fans) ready for The Undertaker as a good guy? All these changes in plans signals the phasing down of Hogan. And don't buy the story that the steroid scandal, about to be open a bit more with the impending 20/20 piece in late February, had nothing to do with it.

In my book, the top match of a Wrestlemania should be the WWF title match. Pure and simple. Hogan has been in the main event of every Wrestlemania except one (Number IV in 1988 in Atlantic City). Now the house of cards that Vince has built is all in tatters, and one good breath will topple it. The title match between Ric Flair vs. Randy Savage, in effect, moves Hogan from main event status in most fans' eyes, even if his match goes on last.

Yeah, yeah, I know Hogan's house show title matches were usually fourth or fifth on a card. But this is the WWF's bread and butter card of the year. So he's taking a five-month sabbatical to do a movie. That's the given story. If a few more Phil Mushnick columns spring up right before April 5, Hogan may be taking a lot longer to make that movie and get out of the business. Say, forever.

This bulletin...

That sound you just heard was thousands of male wrestling fans' hearts being shattered. As this is less than 12 hours away from going to the fax machine, I found out the First Lady of Wrestling is no longer ... available. Best wishes to the newly married couple of Madusa Maceli and Eddie Gilbert (!). Through it all - - whether you're enzuigiri-kicking Ricky Steamboat, doing Yoshihiro Asai moonsaults on Michael Hayes or just making life miserable for the WCW babyfaces -- we as wrestling fans hopefully realize even heels have lives, too. Even cares and loves. So good luck, you and Eddie, and don't blow it.

Damn, I should have seized the moment when Madusa was at that Joel Goodhart luncheon in 1988. Oh well. In the words of a famous Whiffer ... comparing Madusa to Missy Hyatt is like comparing ice cream to horse manure.

One more thing, guys: Squeeze the toothpaste tube from the bottom. See everyone next week.

Sting-Steamboat-Rhodes win, Abby-Cactus disappointing in Jacksonville

Three Count reader John Patton and I attended a World Championship Wrestling show February 7 at the Jacksonville Coliseum. The following is our report:

1. Marcus Alexander Bagwell defeated Terry Taylor with a roll-up after a referee's reversed decision. This began as Big Josh vs. Taylor, but Bagwell came out and asked Josh if he could substitute in the match. What followed was neat, with Taylor being carried 40-feet back to the ring by Josh after attempting to walk out on

Results roundup By *Three Count* readers and staff

the match. The bout itself was good, with Taylor leading the improving Bagwell well. Taylor pinned Bagwell with his feet on the ropes, but Josh came out and finked to the referee. The decision was then reversed, with Bagwell pinning Taylor immediately after. Grade: B.

2. Johnny B. Badd defeated Richard Morton with a side sunset flip into a roll-up. The match itself was fine, with Badd proving he knows a few wrestling moves well (power slams, sunset flips and arm drags). What bothered me about this match was the lack of hype about this bout being a return match. It would have meant a lot more to the people in Jacksonville (and to get over Badd) had this been announced as a return match from the card the month before, which saw Morton pin Badd using the ropes. Grade: C+.

3. Ron Simmons pinned Diamond Dallas Page after a shoulder block. Simmons got a great reaction, but Page had none. Page made a few mistakes, but tried really hard. Grade: C-.

4. Rick-Scott Steiner defeated The Young Pistols when Scott pinned Steve Armstrong with a frankensteiner. This match was poor early, with the Pistols' gyrations making it appear they thought they were wrestling The Freebirds. The last two minutes, though, were real good, with the Steiners doing their hot moves. Grade: C.

5. Abdullah the Butcher pinned Cactus Jack with an elbow smash. This match started out interesting, as Cactus popped Abby in the head three times with a chair. It looked so realistic the crowd fell silent for about two minutes. From there, the match was one big chokehold. About the only amusement came when the fans began chanting "Abdullah," which is one of those things you would figure you would never hear. After the pinfall, there was only a 45-second brawl outside the ring (other areas of the country have been treated to much

more), with the only highlight Abby giving Jack a shoulder smash onto some wooden boards. Very disappointing. Grade: D.

6. Barry Windham pinned Larry Zbyszko in a bullrope match after hitting Zbyszko with the cowbell. This was originally supposed to be Bagwell vs. Zbyszko, but was changed for some inexplicable reason (ironically, announcing a Windham-Zbyszko bullrope match in pre-card hype would probably have helped sell tickets). This match wasn't very good, as Zbyszko didn't work well with the gimmick. Also, these matches usually need juice (a.k.a. blood) to be effective. Grade: C-.

7. Sting-Ricky Steamboat-Dustin Rhodes defeated Rick Rude-Bobby Eaton-Arn Anderson when Sting pinned Eaton with clothesline off the top rope. Rhodes did the "Dusty twirl" with Anderson and Eaton, elbowing the duo in sequence. It really got good after the five-minute mark, when Rude entered the match. He was far-and-away the star of the match, leaping off the top of the cage at one point with a double axe-handle on to Rhodes. Rude then climbed the cage again, but lost balance and straddled himself atop the cage. He hung perilously close to falling off for about 90 seconds before working his way back. At one point when Steamboat was in the match getting worked over, fans began chanting "We want Sting," which I'm sure thrilled Steamboat to no end. It seems Sting is "over" as a babyface more in Jacksonville than anywhere else. After the 18-minute match, Zbyszko and manager Paul E. Dangerously rushed the ring and locked the cage door to pound on the faces. Windham came out and climbed the cage to make the save. Grade: B+.

Notes: The crowd was about 2,700, which is down 300 from the 1/16 WCW show in Jacksonville. WCW should be happy with that figure, as it was raining and Jacksonville is getting burnt out at wrestling ... WCW returns 4/5, which is the Sunday of Wrestlemania VIII. They are hoping to draw a crowd by putting tickets on sale at intermission for the *Wrestle War* pay-per-view show May 17 emanating from the Coliseum. No word on a lineup for either show.

Live reports are encouraged from all readers who attend any sort of wrestling card, and will be attributed as such. Reports should include a match description, a letter grade for the content, any interesting comments about the show, and should be sent as quickly as possible to insure freshness. Please send to P.O. Box 12795, Gainesville, Fla., 32604-0795.

WRESTLING SCHOOL WARS BEGIN IN TAMPA; WILLETS OFF LMLW SHOW

By Alex Marvez
Three Count Editor

The wrestling school war on the west coast of Florida became a bit more heated February 8 with the official opening of the Monster Factory wrestling school at the Sportatorium in Downtown Tampa.

The Monster Factory is the name of a small chain of wrestling school's operated by former grappler "Pretty Boy" Larry Sharpe, who is probably wrestling's most famous mainstream trainer. The two most famous proteges of the school are Bam Bam Bigelow and Papa Shongo (a.k.a. The Soul Taker). Sharpe's school found

Alex Marvez Sunshine State Report

considerable success in New Jersey, where local cards using talent strictly from the school draw well. Students, though, are required to sell a certain amount of tickets for the show before being allowed to perform.

The interesting aspect to this Monster Factory is where Sharpe is going to operate the school, and who the instructor will be. The plan right now is for the school to run Monday through Wednesday at the Sportatorium (Yes, the same building that already houses a wrestling school operated by Jimmy Backlund and Ron Slinker). James Manley, who I am told owns the Sportatorium, will allow both schools to operate there, with Backlund and Slinker teaching the other days of the week.

Running the Monster Factory will be Al Costello, the former member of the Kangaroos tag-team. Costello runs his own wrestling school in near-by St. Petersburg, and speculation has already begun about whether he will try to lure Monster Factory students to his own school for a cheaper training cost.

The cost for three months of training at the Monster Factory is \$3,000. In comparison, the price of learning at Larry "The Great" Malenko's gym in Tampa is about \$20 a week. And I know Malenko is a fantastic teacher and person. Upon completion of the Monster Factory's training, the student is guaranteed one professional match. And then they're on their own.

LMLW: For the moment, Kathy Willets will not be appearing as guest time keeper for this group's March 2 show at the Fort Lauderdale War Memorial. Willets, who was sentenced to a year of probation on prostitution charges, had her personal appearances yanked because of a legal problem, but may resume them later this month.

• Line up for the February 28 show at the Immokalee High School gym (show was moved from an original February 29 date because of a conflict with a basketball tournament) has a 10-girl battle royal, Pink Cadillac vs. Bambi, Penelope Paradise vs. Wendi Richter (which should be pretty good), Maliah Hosaka vs. Luna Vachon, Peggy Lee Leather vs. Allison Royal and A.J. Watson vs. "Big Bad Mama" Brenda Lee. All shows will also feature "House of Humperdink" segments hosted by Sir Oliver Humperdink.

• Group owner Howard Brody is offering special rates for both of the above-mentioned shows. Call 305-981-1577 for more information.

Suncoast: In news relating to this group, Diamond Jack's February 21 show at the Manatee County Civic Center will not feature Brady "Fire Cat" Boone, who will be touring for All Japan Pro Wrestling at the time of the show. AJPW is also planning to bring the new Black Hearts (Tom Nash and Dave "Mr. Everything" Johnson) for a tour later this year.

CWF: Paul Spiegel's Championship Wrestling from Florida is holding monthly shows at the Exposure Country and Western Bar in Tampa. The last card drew about 150 people, with Paradise defeating Royal via disqualification as the highlight. The group's next show at Exposure is February 29.

Sheet Spotlight

Here's a look at the top stories of some of the other wrestling newsletters, with subscription information:

Jeff Cohen's Fantasy Federation (Feb.-Mar. 1992): Play-by-play descriptions of fantasy matches between Big Van Vader vs. Sting, Jushin Liger vs. Jeff Jarrett and The Ultimate Warrior vs. Van Hammer. Bi-monthly; \$3 for 3 issues; 8 pages. 50 Shelley Lane, Great Neck, NY 11023.

Sheldon Goldberg's Mat Marketplace (February 1992): Biography on Farmer Burns, regarded as the first wrestling champion of the pro wrestling era. Article on music albums recorded by wrestlers by Dr. Robert J. Bryla. Product spotlight and classified listings. Bi-monthly; \$2.50 an issue; 10 pages. P.O. Box 2371, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130.

Mike Sawyer's Legdrop (February 10, 1992): Detailed information on WWF angles and gossip. Transcript of Ric Carter's Wrestle Talk radio show featuring Rich Mancuso and Bill Kunkel that resulted in an on-air verbal war. No publication schedule listed; \$5 for 5 issues; 10 pages. 831 Pasadena Ave., Niagara Falls, NY 14304.

Guerrera-Octagon feud heats up; Shaw makes debut for EMMML

By CARLOS REY
Three Count Columnist

The Lucha Libre shows on Galavision are rapidly becoming some of the best around today, and are sure to become collector's items soon. The EMMML's February 7 show from Arena Mexico (aired on Galavision on February 9) was an example of that, with hot action from start to finish.

The results:

1. The heel (rudo) team of Los Brazos (Brazo del Oro-Brazo de Plata -El Brazo) defeated fellow villains Los Intocables (Pierroth Jr.-Masakre-MS1) in a two-of-three fall match. Although this was a rudo vs. rudo bout, the fans were heavily in favor of Los Brazos, especially of Brazo de Plata, who has been renamed Super Porky by

Carlos Rey Reporte de Lucha Libre

the fans because of his resemblance to Porky Pig. In fact, even when Los Brazos go against a tecnico team in Mexico, they are still cheered. This bout consisted of virtually all brawling, with the teams splitting the first two falls. The Brazos won the third fall when Porky pinned Pierroth Jr. in the middle of the ring with help from his brothers. The crowd went wild at the finish.

2. The Ultimate Dragon (Yoshihiro Asai) defeated The Blue Panther in a much-awaited two-of-three falls match. These two worked great together. The Dragon completely dominated the first fall and pinned Panther with a bridge (or puente). The opposite in the second fall, as Panther dominated and gained a pinfall. The third fall saw both guys give their all. The Dragon's backward somersault out of the ring is a must-see move. Dragon and Panther went through a series of near falls until Dragon finally cradled Panther for the pin.

3. The tecnico team of Atlantis-Rayo de Jalisco Jr.-Solomon Grundy defeated Los Hermanos Dinamita (Cien Caras-Mascara Año 2000-Universo 2000) in two-of-three falls. This bout was very heated, as about 18 months ago, Rayo Jr. unmasked Caras and vowed to also unmask his brothers. Another match consisting mostly of brawling. The first fall went to the technicos with Grundy pinning Universo in the middle of the ring. The rudos won the second fall, with Caras ripping Jalisco's mask to shreds in the process. The third fall was full of action, with the rudos dominating. But just as it looked like they would take the match, out came Aaron Grundy

(Mike Shaw -- a.k.a. Norman the Lunatic, Muchan Singh) dressed and looking just like his brother. Aaron jumped into the ring and pinned all three rudos at the same time, with the referee counting the fall because he thought Solomon was on top.

4. This was for the national middle-weight title pitting Octagon (with Conan) in his corner against Fuerza Guerrero (with Caras in his corner). The first fall was full of great moves and acrobatics, with Octagon making Guerrero submit. The second fall looked like Octagon would win and retain the title, but Guerrero low-blowed him and made him submit. The third fall had Octagon come back, displaying his devastating arsenal of moves. But Guerrero is known as a wrestler who excels when the pressure is on. The two traded near-falls until Caras low-blowed Octagon, bringing Conan in the ring and forcing the referee to declare the match a no-contest. Octagon and Guerrero will have a mask vs. mask match in about three weeks, which should cap their 18-month feud.

Notes: EMMML has begun using a giant video screen above the ring at Arena Mexico, which gives the show a classy look.

- Be expecting Black Magic (Norman Smiley) to return soon. Smiley, a Miami Beach resident, no-showed Akira Maeda's January 26 RINGS shoot-fighting show in Tokyo, with no reason as to why. (Editor's note: I'll try to get in contact with Smiley for next week's issue).

- There's been talk of Atsushi Onita's Frontier Martial Arts Wrestling group promoting shows in conjunction with WWA owner Benjamin Mora in late May. Onita, who uses talent from the U.S. and Mexico on his Japan shows, would promote one show at the Olympic Auditorium in Los Angeles, and one in Tijuana. I hope to have more information next week.

Desire any wrestling memorabilia? Interested in video tape of old matches or those from other parts of the country or world? Advertise here for free for subscribers only at P.O. Box 12795, Gainesville, Fla. 32604-0795. I'm also looking for results and/or analysis of matches from other arts of the country. Please send them to the above address.

Three Count is a weekly professional wrestling newsletter published by Alex Mavez. Price for subscription is \$6 for one month, \$18 for three months, \$33 for six months and \$66 for one year. Please address all subscription checks to Three Count at P.O. Box 12795, Gainesville, Fla., 32604-0795.

Beefcake better with Justice feud; Frey spending too much too soon

By ALEX MARVEZ
Three Count Editor

Yes, the inevitable has arrived. My very own notes column -- in my own newsletter! Actually, this will be a semi-regular feature, as I want to give carte blanche to my other columnists to type to their hearts' content. But I had some thoughts on the wrestling world this week that I wanted to express. And since my column in *The Miami Herald* isn't quite big enough ... yet ...

- In the build-up of the Hulk Hogan-Sid Justice

Alex Marvez The Three Count

match at Wrestlemania VIII, Brutus Beefcake will reportedly be brutalized by Justice, with Hogan dedicating the match to his fallen buddy.

Not only is the situation rushed (after all, WWF fans just learned Hogan "saved" Beefcake's life after his para-sailing accident, and haven't had enough time to build the desired sympathy), but there's a better way of doing it. Have Hogan lose to Justice at Wrestlemania VIII and get brutalized in the process (or if a compromise has to be reached, let Hogan win by disqualification). Beefcake can make the save, and actually hurt Justice by head butting him with a hockey mask (which he should wear anyway as a protection against his facial injuries). Beefcake can swear revenge for Hogan and wrestle Justice throughout the summer until the Hulkster returns from the injuries to face the Sidster at Summer Slam. I think a Beefcake return could draw some fan interest -- at least enough to help the WWF survive what looks like a dead summer period. It also keeps Justice from becoming just another victim to the Hogan legdrop.

- Money seems to be flowing like water in WCW, and I don't know if that's such a good sign. Sure, WCW made some key talent acquisitions in Rick Rude and Ricky Steamboat, but not every current or former WWF star has to be brought in if they're available. Also, the high-priced deals some WCW stars are receiving (Missy Hyatt, Nikita Koloff) are going to bring the asking price of Rude and manager Paul E. Dangerously way up when they want their contracts renewed (Dangerously's deal is finished April 1; Rude's 142-date deal may run out by the end of April with the way WCW has him scheduled). Hopefully, this situation doesn't turn out for new WCW executive vice president Kip Frey

like it did for Jim Herd, when Herd paid too much money for all sorts of talent early in his tenure and ended up regretting it. Frey should wait until he can become a proper judge of talent, and work with Dusty Rhodes in making talent acquisitions.

- Las Vegas radio guru Mike Tenay said WCW makes enough money weekly off Hyatt's 900-number to fly her in from Tokyo if need be. That's fine, but I wonder about something Dangerously told a group of wrestling insiders last May. He said there are thousands of Missy's out there who look even better, won't mess up their lines and would be able to get angles over through their commentary. Makes you look at what Missy adds to WCW programming and wonder if she's worth it.

- Frey has moved into Herd's former office and installed new furniture. Most members of WCW's office staff really enjoy working under Frey, who has installed a low-stress atmosphere in his brief tenure.

- Frey was in Hawaii the first week of February scouting out a possible pay-per-view site. This is where WCW's working relationship with New Japan Pro Wrestling may come in handy. The NJPW television show aired regularly in Hawaii for many years, and placing some of those stars on the card may help sell tickets.

- Best quote of the year thus far goes to Jesse Ventura. After WCW announcing legend Gordon Solie introduced Ventura at a SuperBrawl event center, Jesse responded, "Gordon, are you still alive?"

Advertisements

Jeff Mullins of P.O. Box 36189, San Jose, Calif., 95158, has put out a double issue of his controversial monthly humor sheet *Pro Wrestling Sushi*, which he is selling for the single issue price of \$1.50. New and former subscribers who send Jeff \$6 for four issues will receive the double issue free.

Sheldon Goldberg of P.O. Box 2371, Jamaica Plain MA 02130 produces *Mat Marketplace*, a wrestling merchandise and memorabilia newsletter, on a bi-monthly basis for \$2.50 an issue. The classified listings for wrestling paraphernalia in *MM* are amazing.

Sheldon is now also producing the bi-monthly *Things and Stuff*, a newsletter that covers wrestling and "off-beat magazines, books, videos, comics, catalogs, social comments and anything else we feel like writing about." Price is \$2.50 an issue, and available at the same address.

Next Issue: My scheduled interview with former *Matwatch* editor Steve Beverly was postponed one week because of the large amount of wrestling news since our last issue. I want to thank all of you who have shown patience as I finally resolved the newsletter's back issue problems. Next week's newsletter should also be packed, as stories are planned about Buzz Sawyer's recent passing, Marty Janetty's apparent re-instatement by the World Wrestling Federation, a live report from the WWF's February 15 show in Orlando, columns by Carlos Rey and Paul Hanlin Jr. and much more. As you notice, I continue to tinker with *Three Count's* format, and I am very happy with the results thus far. Please give me some input on what y'all think. The Memphis column I was hoping to add this issue is also temporarily on hold. However, I am hoping to add a weekly Japanese columnist within the next few issues. More word on that next week.

I also want to give a special thanks to Dr. Mike Lano for sending me some recent episodes of his weekly talk show, Canvas Cavity (available on Alameda's United Artist Cable systems in California Thursdays at 9:30 p.m.). I know Mike is not the most popular person among some sheet readers, but his recent shows have been top-notch, including a fantastic phone interview with Terry Funk. Also, a special thanks to Chris Qualmann and Arena Report's Ron Lemieux for paying my bar tab February 7 after the WCW matches in Jacksonville. Where are the ATM's when you need them? Until next Tuesday...

WWF FOX Special

(Continued from Page 4)

4. Savage defeated Roberts with an elbow drop off the top rope. The finish was decisive, because Savage will replace Hogan against Flair at Wrestlemania. That makes me sad, because I thought the Savage-Roberts feud had more life left in it. This was as fast-paced as their Tuesday in Texas match, which I enjoyed because of the psychology. The post-match saw Savage deliver another elbow drop off the top and attempt to hit Roberts with the ring bell, but he was restrained by WWF road agents as Roberts crawled to the dressing room. The show ended with Liz running from the dressing room to be with Randy, while a camera catches Roberts peering through the dressing room curtain saying, "It's not over." On television the weekend of February 15, the skit will show where Roberts attempts to hit Liz with a chair but is restrained by The 'Taker, who will become a babyface. Roberts will face The 'Taker at Wrestlemania. Grade: B.

Notes: I enjoyed the show, and was impressed at the way the WWF can get its angles over to the mainstream through video vignettes and interviews. Bobby Heenan was fantastic as a commentator. I wonder, though, if the mainstream public watching was able to absorb all that happened on the show. I don't think it's a good idea to turn two of your main-eventers (The 'Taker-Justice) when the turn doesn't follow the storyline of the house shows, especially when both had plenty of life left in their current roles. I truly believe the WWF is becoming desperate to turn things around, and is hot-shotting and using last-minute decisions to try and reach that goal. The Flair-Hogan match will also be the third time in four months WWF fans were given incorrect information on a pay-per-view show (the removal of Savage and Roberts from Survivor Series and the original announcement to the wrestling media of Flair vs. Hogan at Tuesday in Texas), which may slightly affect the buy rate.

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